

JANUARY 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

This issue starts the tenth year of *THE NEW JERSEY CONSTRUCTION REPORTER*. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) began publishing construction statistics in 1996. Since then, the *CONSTRUCTION REPORTER* has changed very little. The format has remained constant and the price is still \$50 for a yearly subscription.

This year there are some significant changes to report. The DCA will continue to publish a printed version of the *CONSTRUCTION REPORTER*. It will look very much like past issues. Subscribers may pay the same price to cover print and publication costs. The *CONSTRUCTION REPORTER* will continue to have summary statistics on major indicators of the construction industry: authorized housing, new office and retail construction, and the estimated cost of all residential and nonresidential construction authorized by building permits. With the January 2005 issue, however, the DCA also will prepare an online version of the publication. Each month, it will show activity for every municipality that reports on building permits and certificates of occupancy (CO). Data from the online version is available free of charge. It will not be summarized or analyzed, as it is in the *CONSTRUCTION REPORTER*, but it will be in formats that can be looked up or downloaded and analyzed by users. The web address for this site is: www.nj.gov/dca/codes/cr/conrep.shtml.

Our intent is to assist planners, other municipal officials, and housing advocates in their efforts to meet fair housing needs. New housing regulations adopted and administered by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) tie affordable housing obligation to growth for residential use as well as office, retail, and other nonresidential uses. The COAH growth/share rules focus on development as measured by COs, not building permits. Construction officials issue COs at the end of the construction process, when buildings are completed and ready to be lived in or used. They issue building permits to start the process, to allow builders to build. Most of the information in the printed version is from building permits, the start of the process. The online version will continue to report permit activity, but it also will have more CO information to measure what was completed and to help measure fair housing obligations. We hope you find both the printed and online versions helpful.

Monthly Activity

The estimated cost of construction authorized by building permits in January was \$1.041 billion. Residential work accounted for 51.6 percent, or \$537.2 million. Over 34 percent of all building permit activity in January was for new houses. Office, retail, and other nonresidential uses amounted to \$504.2 million. This was 48.4 percent of activity authorized by January building permits. The number of municipalities reporting for the month was 532.

Atlantic City in Atlantic County had the most work, \$126.7 million; nearly all of this (\$122.5 million) was for work on the expansion of the Borgata Hotel, Casino, and Spa. The new development is to include a 45-story hotel tower. Jersey City in Hudson County had \$61.8 million of construction. A new mixed-use building with 82 condominiums as well as commercial space accounted for \$21.5 million. The City also had a \$24.6-million expansion and renovation of an elementary school. In addition, this municipality had 167 new houses in January. Livingston Township in Essex County reported \$54.3 million of activity. The biggest project was a \$20-million mixed-use development that will consist of a four-story garage, 31 dwelling units, and retail space. Warren Township in Somerset County had \$42.2 million of construction. Nearly all of this was for a new school for the developmentally disabled. Raritan Borough in Somerset County had \$24.4 million of construction; \$24 million was reported on a building permit authorizing work on 240 luxury apartments. Raritan's 240 authorized housing units in January made up more than ten percent of the 2,294 dwelling units reported on building permits throughout the State. North Wildwood City in Cape May County had 77 authorized units. Newark in Essex County had 75. Ocean City in Cape May County reported 72, and Roxbury Township in Morris County had 71.